(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government have adopted "Hire and Fire" policy for labour reforms and have decided to make sweeping changes in the provisions of Industrial Disputes Act, 1947;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether it is also a fact that industrialist would benefit more than labourers as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Review/updation of labour laws is an ongoing process in order to bring them in tune with the prevailing situation and emerging needs of the economy. Taking into consideration the requirement of productivity, competitiveness and employment generation, a need has been felt to make amendments in certain labour laws and steps initiated accordingly.

(c) and (d) The amendments proposed in the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 cannot be divulged at this stage.

(e) Amendments to various labour laws are brought about keeping in view the requirements of the social partners and after ensuring that the workers interests are fully protected.

Social security for unorganised sector

†1719. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal to initiate social security scheme for protection of the workers of unorganized sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that 20 or more people are necessary to form an organization under the EPF or MP Act; and

(d) if so, by when Government propose to bring an amendment providing the facility of forming an organization with lesser number of workers?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) The number of workers in the unorganized sector being huge and widely dispersed, the extension of a comprehensive social security cover to such workers is a gigantic task and would be a time consuming effort requiring massive resources. Possibilities are being explored by the Government for extending pension coverage to identifiable groups who are presently not covered under the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme.

(c) and (d) The establishments notified under Schedule I of the Employees' Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 and those having 20 or more workers come under the purview of the Act. The proposal to amend the EPF & MP Act, 1952 to reduce the threshold for coverage under the PF has been discussed by the Central Board of Trustees (EPF). No time frame for carrying out the amendments can be given at this stage.

Violation of trade union rights

1720. SHRI ABANI ROY:
SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "trade union rights violated in India" which appeared in the 'Hindu' dated the 20th June, 2002;

(b) if so, whether the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has condemned violation of workers trade union rights in India;

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(d) whether Government propose to take any steps to ensure the rights of trade unions; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) to (e) Cases of violation of trade union rights, if reported, are taken up with the Central and State Enforcement Machinery for investigation and redressal.